(b) if so, the reasons for not implementing the Act; and

(c) the steps being taken to rectify the situation and meet their other demands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 is being implemented on the Railways within the limits of economic capacity and development.

(c) The demands of Northern Railway Physically Handicapped employees are under active consideration of the Ministry of Railways.

Automatic upgrade facility system for waitlisted passengers

1321. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways are considering to introduce an automatic upgrade facility system for the wait listed passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that if implemented in all the trains the above system, the Railways are expected to earn huge revenue from it; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) With a view to optimise the utilisation of available accommodation in train, a scheme to upgrade full fare paying passengers to the next higher class against the available vacant accommodation has since been extended to all Mail/Express trains having sleeping accommodation w.e.f. 24-02-2006. The salient features of the scheme are given below:—

(i) The scheme is applicable to only full fare paying passengers, free of charge.

(ii) It is applicable only in those trains having sleeping accommodation.

(iii) The passengers for upgradation will be selected on random basis by the System at the time of preparation of reservation charts.

(iv) Upgradation of passengers will be done as under:—

- Sleeper to 3AC or First Class
- 3 AC to 2 AC
- 2 AC to 1 AC

(v) Upgradation will not be done for block booking transactions.

(vi) Upgradation will be done only to the extent of clearance of the combined waiting list of all classes. If there is no waiting list, no upgradation will take place.

(vii) If a passenger, who has been upgraded, cancels his ticket, cancellation charges of the original class only will be payable.

(c) and (d) It is expected to result in increased earnings as the wait listed passengers who earlier used to get the tickets cancelled due to non-availability of confirmed accommodation, may now get confirmed accommodation on account of upgradation. The exact amount of revenue, which the Railways may earn on account of this, however, cannot be estimated.

Pit lines at Madurai

1322. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up three pit lines at Madurai railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Madurai has two pit lines of 18 coach and 26 coach capacity respectively. Two new pit lines of 600 metre (26 coach) length each have been sanctioned as part of Maduari-Rameshwaram gauge conversion project with augmentation of existing sickline capacity.

Projects of South Central Railways

1323. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the Railway Projects sacntioned for South Central Railway during the last two years;